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# OPEDA

(ORGANIZED IN 1929)

Organization of Professional Employees  
of the U. S. Department of Agriculture

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## Introducing Richard D. Aplin Director of Departmental Administration, To OPEDA

The St. Patrick's Day luncheon meeting of OPEDA was well attended by members, who heard Richard D. Aplin, Director of Departmental Administration, re-affirm the traditional recognition and support, on behalf of the Secretary's office, of OPEDA's "wholesome and realistic" objectives. His remarks on the "Place and Opportunity of OPEDA for Public Service" were an inspiration to all who heard him. Mr. Henderson, in expressing OPEDA's appreciation for Mr. Aplin's interest and very understanding appraisal of the importance of the work of the professional employees of the Department, assured him of the willingness of this organization "to do whatever it can to assist the administration and this great country of ours."

The inspiration to be gained from Mr. Aplin's talk warrants the inclusion of it in this issue of the OPEDA newsletter for the benefit of those who could not hear it in person. Since Mr. Aplin's biographical background and long experience in government have been covered in the USDA newsletter they will not be repeated here other than to note that the Department is fortunate in that his education, training, and experience have been so closely connected with agriculture and its problems. Mr. Aplin said that "one thing I had to do when coming here was to sit in on the budget meetings here in the Department and it was here that I learned something of the programs that are being carried on, what the financial needs are, etc. It is certainly a liberal education to anyone in the Department and especially to someone who has not been working on these problems. At these meetings I have gotten some idea of the projects that are being carried on and a realization that the professional employees are the key group in that work."

### A Critical Period

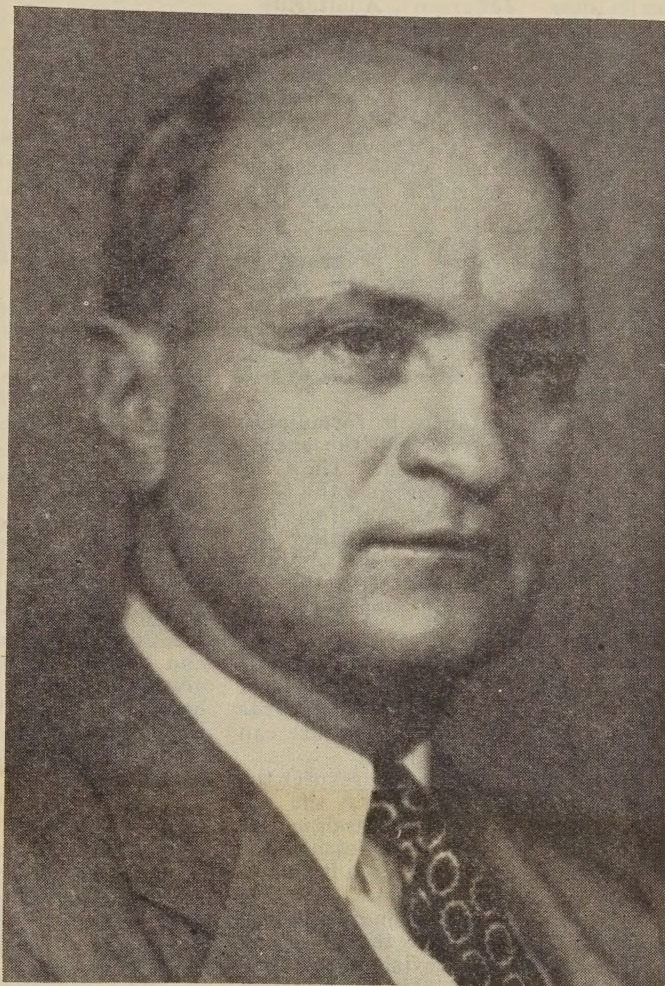
"This is a critical period for our nation and for the world. As I watched on my television set the atomic explosion in Nevada today I thought that it was somewhat of a symbol of the critical times in which we are living. It is a period that may decide the future of civilization for decades or even centuries to come. Out of it may come peace or the most destructive of all wars. It is important to keep this fact in mind. It should color all we do in our daily work. Dramatic, world shaking events of recent years have thrown the greatest responsibility in history on American agriculture. This is because the strength of the Nation, the strength of our industrial economy, the strength of the military service—all rest on agriculture as the most basic industry of all."

### Importance of Agriculture

"Here in the United States we feel that agriculture is playing an important part in world events. Efficiency in agriculture and a strong industrial economy have made this nation strong and a great power in the world. Throughout the ages agriculture in general has furnished the basic needs of the people—food, clothing and shelter—but it is important to remember that here we have developed to the point where only a small proportion of our population is needed to supply these needs. In this country only 1 out of 9 are engaged in agriculture, while in many other nations half or three-fourths of the workers are employed in agriculture; this figure is even higher in some countries. So that efficient agriculture has released millions for work in industry and for military service."

### Pride in Our Profession

"I have always felt proud of my connection with the Department of Agriculture over a long period of time, and it seems to me that the Department, over the years, has had a large number of people dedicated to the work of the



RICHARD D. APLIN

Department—and this is especially true of professional people—the agronomists, chemists, physicists, economists, lawyers, professionals in the field of information, and professionals in semi-administrative and administrative capacities. All of us may take pride in the organization we have here and in the people who make it up. We have a fine building here and good equipment both here and throughout the rest of the country, but it is the people themselves who make a success or failure of them. Recently when I was talking with Senator Aiken of Vermont, chairman of the Senate Agricultural Committee, he said he believed the Department of Agriculture had the best staff of technical people of any of the governmental departments."

### Professional Achievements

"I know you all come from a wide range of agencies in the Department and therefore may not know of all the projects in which the Department is engaged that have been raising standards of living, so I would like to mention a few; they illustrate how professional people in the Department have made these achievements. Progress has been made to a point where, we are told, a man-hour of farm labor in 1952 produced over half again as much food as in 1940, nearly twice as much as in 1930, and 2½ times as much as in 1910. This all adds up to the result we now have."

"Recently I had an opportunity to read reports on some particular problems being carried on, particularly in research. A few of them I want to mention: (See page 3)



## Secretary Benson on Cooperation

(On April 30 Secretary Benson made an address entitled "Legislative-Executive Relationships in the Administration of Programs as viewed by the Executive" before the Graduate School of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Jefferson Auditorium, Washington, D. C. The address was printed in the Congressional Record of May 5, 1953. Most employees of the Department have doubtless had an opportunity to read the address in full in The Record or from other sources, but the significance of the message prompts us to reprint a few excerpts from it.)

The administration of programs is shared by the legislative and executive branches of our Government to a far greater extent than commonly realized. No sharp lines of distinction separate the respective spheres of the two branches.

Policy, for instance, is formulated by both the Congress and the executive branch of government. The Congress decides what programs the Government shall undertake and for what purposes. But, important policy decisions are rightly left to the administrator, who is charged with the responsibility of carrying out the intent of Congress.

The principles and practices that I hope will be observed by all employees of the Department of Agriculture can be briefly stated as follows:

1. We will recognize and respect the interest of the Congress in the administration of programs assigned to us. And we will not question the good faith of the Congress in its manifestations of that interest.

2. In the administration of our programs, we will observe the fact that, by constitutional provision, the final policy decisions of this Government are made by the Congress. We shall strive forthrightly and honestly to carry out the decisions of the Congress. When we have suggestions or requests to make, or criticisms to offer, we shall take them to the Congress in good faith. And we shall stand ready at all times to respond to requests from the Congress for information or assistance that would strengthen the basis for decisions to be made by the Congress.

3. We shall respect the right of the Congress to know what this Department is doing at any time. We shall remember that the Congress is not only interested in receiving reports of our stewardship; it is entitled to them—and in time to act upon them. To this end we shall welcome constant and full consultation with the Congress. As some of you know, I issued a memorandum in late January directing Department employees to give representatives of the General Accounting Office, an independent arm of Congress, full access to all records and files, except those specifically prohibited by law or Executive order. This is a continuing Department policy.

4. We shall exercise with care and

equity the rulemaking authority vested in the Department by the Congress. This authority will be used only in furthering the understood intent of Congress.

5. When we make mistakes, we shall honestly acknowledge them and assume full responsibility for them. Certainly they are not to be blamed on the Congress.

6. We shall communicate to the Congress through appropriate channels our estimates of need, as we sense it, in order that we might more effectively carry out the responsibilities with which we are charged.

7. We shall strive always for the advancement of American agriculture in the public interest; and we shall carefully avoid all danger of serving as agents of selfish groups seeking special privileges.

8. We shall keep the welfare of the people—all of the people—uppermost in our minds at all times. The supreme test of our actions shall be: How will this affect the character, morale, and well-being of the people?

While I do have a definite agricultural policy in which I believe, I have no program of my own to offer. It is my conviction that farm programs are made, and should be made, in the Congress. Our job is to execute the laws and to administer the programs that the Congress establishes as efficiency and effectively as we can. We shall always be ready to help the Congress by means of testimony, by presentation of factual material, and by such recommendations as are proper to the executive branch. But the making of farm programs is a legislative function, not an executive one.

I have pledged to myself that I shall not knowingly be outdone in cooperative attitude by anyone in this Department. It seems to me that since I want your cooperation, I must if possible outdo you in extending mine.

When I came here I was told by some well-meaning friends that I could expect to find opposition, and possibly even disloyalty to me, among the employees. I did not accept that opinion then, and I reject it even more vigorously now.

Let me assure you that just as I stand ready to acknowledge errors where they exist, I stand ready also to defend this Department and its employees against unfair criticism and attack wherever they may arise.

We in the front office—as many of you call it—have no illusions about who and what make the Department of Agriculture tick. You do. By you, I mean all of the thousands of employees in Washington and throughout this country, and those in foreign countries. You, the employees, are the muscle and the bone, yes, and the brain as well, of this great Department.

Last week I gave a talk at Purdue University, and in concluding it I said something about human brotherhood, and that if we applied it in our per-

## Letters to OPEDA

Editor's Note: Members of OPEDA may use this column to express themselves on any matters of interest, OPEDA objectives, proposed legislation, etc. (About 100 words or less.)

### The OPEDA Newsletter

OPEDA is a fine publication but it seems to me it can be made more "readable." Type and spacing could be improved to correct that "crowded" appearance which often makes an otherwise excellent article hard on the eyes. The type appearing in the front page box is an example of an easier-to-read type. Content of OPEDA is interesting but much too wordy for busy people. I guess we are spoiled by the terse, "punchy" style of some newspaper writing. Our problem is to get "the mostest into the leastest." I recommend a condensed style of writing and a minimum of editorializing and verbatim reporting.—C. E. Wylie, PMA, Washington, D. C.

(Please let us hear from others on this subject, particularly the verbatim reporting of speeches.—Ed.)

### Say It With Membership

I have personally felt that there is a considerable need for the Organization of Professional Employees and am convinced that you personally (letter addressed to former Executive Officer Kneipp) and other officers have at certain times made moves that have had a considerable bearing on decisions affecting our welfare.

Every now and then I have expressed these sentiments to our personnel and although I believe most are in favor of OPEDA, nevertheless they are usually negligent in keeping up their membership. At a recent meeting we volunteered to send in requests with the enclosed results. (5 new memberships—Ed.)—Kenneth Welton, SCS, Indianapolis, Ind.

sonal lives most of our problems would disappear.

I should like to say to all the employees of the Department that the one thing I want to see here, more than any other, is the better realization of this ideal of brotherhood. It would make our problems disappear. It would make this place an oasis in a world that sorely needs such an oasis. Brotherhood is not a theory to apply vaguely to people 10,000 miles away. It is a fact that applies especially and specifically to you and to me and to all our fellow employees.

Some of you, I know, are disturbed by the changes that are going on. We are striving for greater efficiency, and we are trying to reduce expenditures, and there are always uncertainties in such a situation. Let me assure you that we are endeavoring to make any changes as painless as possible. We do not envision any mass reduction in force. We want to give Department employees every possible assurance that we are not thinking about them in a cold, impersonal way. We do not want an atmosphere of fear in these corridors and rooms.



## Aplin

(Continued from page 1)

### Elastic Cotton

"A group is working on a new treatment for cotton so as to make it more efficient for use in bandages. During the war it was found that cotton with more elasticity was greatly needed, so the Southern Regional Research Laboratory undertook work on this project and it is now possible to make elastic bandages from cotton. I have been interested to learn that the armed forces have adopted this development with a saving to them of \$5 million. This particular project was carried on at a cost to the government of about \$50 thousand.

### Penicillin

"Another project I wish to mention is one that was developed at the Northern Regional Research Laboratory at Peoria. The people at that laboratory did a lot of work in bringing about large scale production of penicillin—this was a great achievement of the Department of Agriculture. That laboratory has continued to work on products developed from bacterial growth.

### Substitute For Blood Plasma

"For nine years they have been working on Dextran, a product of bacterial growth. This work was intensified a lot in the last few years when it was discovered that it might be used as a substitute for blood plasma. While we have an excellent blood donation program (in which this Department plays an important part), we have never been able to build up a supply of blood plasma. This finding is certainly a major contribution to the protection of citizens of the country as it is hoped that Dextran can be used in the place of blood plasma in the future.

"An interesting angle to this story is how the laboratory at Peoria found this particular bacteria. There was a small firm in that area that was producing soft drinks. They were concerned with slime forming in the root-beer tanks and asked for assistance from the Department. It was found that certain bacteria were present and the producers were told how to get rid of it; the culture was then brought back to the laboratory and it was from this that Dextran was produced. You might say that this was luck, but professional employees who work in the Department were able to take advantage of the fact that there were unusual bacteria here and to find how they could be utilized.

### Putting Animal Fats to Work

"A big problem in agricultural marketing today is what to do with animal fats. There is an abundant supply of these, and especially of lard, and lack of market; there is also a large supply of inedible animal fat. Actually, the price of lard today is less than in 1913, which reflects the fact that lard has been replaced to a large extent by vegetable fats. Tallow, which is produced from inedible animal fat, is a drug on the market because in the

soap industry detergents have taken over a large part of the market. So in the Eastern Regional Research Laboratory they are trying to find new uses for animal fat. One use which they have found is in connection with the manufacture of plastics. One difficulty there has been that plastic material tends to become brittle. It has now been found that by chemical processes these fats can make plastics softer and less brittle, but tougher. It has made them more useful in manufacturing garden hose, auto seat covers, floor coverings, etc. This not only opens up a use for animal fats, but develops a better product for people of the country.

"Of course, we always have the more normal research—development of new crops and plants, etc. Department of Agriculture is responsible for the development of frozen concentrated fruit juices, soybeans—including adapting them to the most productive harvesting time, uses, etc.

### OPEDA's Contribution

"This organization, I think, serves a vital purpose in helping increase the contributions of professional workers to the Department. I note that OPEDA has been in operation since 1929. From the material published and from contacts already made with you, I know that OPEDA is concerned with the best interests of the Department as well as of its members; also with the public's attitude toward Government employees, matters of legislation (in the enactment of which your organization has undoubtedly played an important part), civil service, administration, etc., as they affect professional employees.

"Of course, you know more about these things than I do, but I did notice in your March 1952 newsletter the report of your Committee on Working Criteria. I was quite interested in that as it brought out some things that hold back professional workers. Suggestions were made as to how conditions should be improved; some of these are being worked on and some will be worked on in the future. Some of the difficulties that were mentioned there I believe cannot be overcome. One of these is 'instability of funds'; I don't know how to make funds stable! That is something of a problem to everyone working in the Government—more so than in private industry.

### OPEDA's Objectives

"I notice also that you have a program of objectives you wish to accomplish currently and I think them quite worthwhile. It is important to the Department—and to the whole nation—that you should continue your efforts to create a favorable climate as possible for professional workers in USDA. They deserve proper recognition, and I know that often the tendency is to lump all public employees together without regard for the special training and special contribution professional people have. It is also important that the professional people in the Department try to improve conditions here, to cooperate with the

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## Opsearch

Dr. Ellis A. Johnson, director, Operations Research Office, the John Hopkins University, spoke on "The Application of Operations Research to Industry" at the February OPEDA luncheon meeting. Dr. Johnson's talk covered in condensed form a speech which he had recently delivered at the Fifth Annual Industrial Engineering Institute, University of California.

As he explained, "Operations research, or opsearch, as it is often abbreviated, is the new name for an old management technique which appears to be of increasing interest to industrial executives." Evidence of the growing interest in the subject is the organization of the Operations Research Society of America, a professional society of operations analysts which publishes a quarterly journal. Dr. Johnson outlined the methods of operations research under the following headings:

The Relation of the Operations Analyst to the Executive.

The Operations Research Checklist for Solving Action Problems.

Some Selected Analytical Tools Used in Operations Research.

Simple Case Histories in Operations Research.

The OPEDA staff office has been informed that those who are interested in obtaining a copy of Dr. Johnson's speech may do so by writing to the Library, Operations Research Office, the John Hopkins University, 6410 Connecticut Avenue, Chevy Chase, Md.

## In Memoriam

Claude O. Brannen, marketing specialist at the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and faculty member at the University of Arkansas for 23 years, died at Washington, D. C., March 19, 1953, after a short illness. He was an active member of OPEDA at the time of his death.

Dr. Brannen was born at Holly, Texas, September 28, 1884. He received his B.S. degree at George Peabody College, Nashville, Tenn., in 1918 and his M.S. in 1919. In 1929 he was awarded the Ph.D. degree by Columbia University.

Dr. Brannen served from 1919 to 1925 as assistant and associate economist in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. In 1925 he went to the University of Arkansas to head the newly organized Department of Rural Economics and Sociology. He remained in Arkansas as head of the department, assistant director and director of the Agricultural Experiment Stations, acting dean and director of the College of Agriculture, and director of the Bureau of Research, until 1948. In October, 1948, he returned to the U. S. Department of Agriculture to assist in the program of developing research and service work of the State Departments of Agriculture and Markets under the Research and Marketing Act of 1946.

Dr. Brannen made an outstanding contribution to the information available on land tenure, and was author of many bulletins and scientific papers.



## OPEDA Lunches at Beltsville

Beltsville members of OPEDA were hosts at the May 20 luncheon, served in the Plant Industry cafeteria. The speaker was Mr. Charles A. Logan, superintendent of the Agricultural Research Center, whose subject was "The Research Center and Its Operation."

Mr. Logan opened his remarks by calling attention to the publication, "The Agricultural Research Center," of the USDA, Misc. Publication No. 697. He also mentioned that the next issue of the National Geographic Magazine will carry an article on the Agricultural Research Center.

### History of Center

Mr. Logan reviewed the history of the Center, going back to June, 1910, when it was started with the purchase of 475 acres by the Bureau of Animal Husbandry and Dairy Division of BAI. He traced its growth to its present expanse of 11,291 acres with approximately 950 buildings, the total cost of which is about \$13 million. There are now facilities for BAI, BDI, EPQ, HN&HE, PISAE, FS, SCS, BU, STDS., GEO. SURVEY, FDA, CIA, and FISH & WILDLIFE, which employ approximately 2,000 people, 45 to 50 percent of whom are scientific personnel.

The group was told that the purpose of the Center is to carry on fundamental research in many fields of agriculture within concentrated facilities. He quoted Dr. Shaw as having said that in the past 25 years there has been spent for all research by the USDA and Experiment Stations about \$1 billion, with an annual return of \$10 billion in increased production due to research.

Mr. Logan indicated that some of the visitors really appreciate the Center, as reflected in the remarks made to him while conducting tours; that one lady had said that she "enjoyed the day so much. I do not begrudge a penny spent here."

### Responsibilities in The Office of Operations

Mr. Logan outlined briefly his responsibilities in the Office of Operations (which employs 270 people) as follows: Develops information and makes recommendations to the Research Administrator on effective use of land and building space for assignment to research bureaus of the ARA and other agencies, including plans for new construction of research facilities; formulates policies for operating functions designed for comprehensive and orderly development of the Agricultural Research Center; maintains and operates the physical plant embracing buildings and grounds, maintenance of power, light, water, sanitation, highways, custodial and health services; provides mechanical shop services for the operating bureaus and agencies at the Center; provides farm labor

and equipment needs for the research bureaus cultivating approximately 2,500 acres; furnishes the procurement, mixing and distribution of feed for animals and poultry, and coal distribution center; and arranges for and conducts tours of scientists, farm groups, and many foreign visitors.

### Scope of Operations

Mr. Logan described in some detail the extent of some of the operations. For example, the granary where some 4,000 tons of feed is mixed each year. Two years ago when the granary had burned down and feed had to be purchased mixed the cost was "\$8 per ton more than when we mixed it ourselves."

To illustrate the scope of the General Services at the Center, Mr. Logan listed the following: Four high-pressure heating plants; 30 low pressure; 870 tons of refrigeration, of which 1 plant is at 100 degrees below zero (this is a walk-in box); 2 sewage disposal plants and 32 septic tanks; 16 miles of sewer line; 1 H<sup>2</sup>O treating plant with 19 miles of 6-inch line and about the same of secondary line. They have treated 134 million gallons of water a year. There are 24 miles of primary power line and 6½ miles of secondary line; 9,500,000 KWH are consumed annually. Approximately 55 miles of highway are maintained.

We were also interested to learn that the Center does a large amount of reimbursible work which has increased from \$548,703 in 1940 to \$1,674,730 in 1952.

Mr. Logan pointed out also that to operate a service organization such as this a lot of people must be pleased and that there are numerous employee problems; but that through central management of the physical plant great savings (for example, \$94,000 in electricity and \$30,000 in feed) have been accomplished. There are yearly savings of \$11,000 on coal and \$10,000 on the cost of water.

Mr. Logan told us that special provision is made to take care of visitors to the Center, 1,814 of whom were served during the month of April, and a total of 8,380 in the first 10 months of this fiscal year. Approximately 2,000 of these visitors are from foreign lands all over the world. He went on to say that this might seem like a great many visitors, but that with a staff of 5 under Mr. Briggs to serve them, one of the problems which a few years ago caused him a great deal of difficulty has now been eliminated.

### Fox Hunting Included!!

We learned also that another problem that has presented considerable difficulty is that of how to cope with wild animals. Mr. Logan said that "last week, for example, 300 chickens were killed by dogs. Foxes are numerous. At one time when we were losing a lot of chickens and turkeys a professional trapper volunteered to help eliminate them. In two months time he caught 60 foxes, but people were stealing his traps so fast he gave

## Federal-State Cooperative Employees

Many letters have been received from Federal-State Cooperative employees in response to the call for such letters in the March OPEDA Newsletter. The letters were solicited upon the request of the interagency group working on the retirement credit objective and have been turned over to that group for use in promoting favorable action thereon.

We are unable to acknowledge or reply individually to these letters but here acknowledge them and thank the members for their help and interest. One question was raised so often that it will be answered here. That question was, "What are the requirements for obtaining credit for State service under present retirement laws and regulations?" Briefly, in order to be considered a Federal employee for retirement purposes, a person working on a Federal-State cooperative project must be—

- (1) Engaged in the performance of Federal functions under authority of an Act of Congress or an Executive Order;
- (2) Appointed or employed by a Federal officer;
- (3) Under the supervision and direction of a Federal officer.

If anyone does not have it well established that retirement credit is or is not due him for any State cooperative service, it is suggested that he present his case to his personnel officer through official channels in order that it may be officially determined from the personnel records. The purpose of legislation for which OPEDA is working is to provide for credit for bona fide cooperative state service for employees now in Federal service even though some of the technicalities, such as Federal appointment, have not been met.

A point that increasingly comes to the attention of management as to why this legislation is necessary is the difficulty that arises in getting employees to transfer from State to Federal employment and vice versa on these cooperative programs. Employees who have built up considerable credit under a State retirement system are unwilling to lose it by transfer to Federal service when that, according to management, is very desirable for the progress of the project. The same is also true of Federal employees who, from the management standpoint, may be able to render greater service to the cooperative project by transferring to State service.

up!" He estimated there were some 500 foxes in and around the Center.

At the conclusion of his speech, Mr. Logan indicated that any members who wished might stay for a tour of the center. Some of those from Washington took advantage of this offer, taking the general tour; others visited laboratories that were of special interest to them.



## The Legislative Situation

As indicated in the March issue of the Newsletter, action in the current session of Congress on the many bills affecting Federal employees is likely to be held to a minimum. So far it appears that it will take positive action on only one item, the Thomas leave rider.

### Thomas Leave Rider

An opportunity to obtain action on the Thomas leave rider developed in connection with legislative action precipitated by certain disclosures that were made with respect to the accumulation of and payment for leave allowed to noncareer employees and officials. While the proposed legislation designed to prevent such payments in the future did not contemplate consideration of the Thomas leave rider, employee organizations, including OPEDA, were quick to inject the cumulative leave question into the situation. OPEDA urged both the Senate and House Committees on Civil Service to amend the proposed legislation to insure that the language would exclude career employees from the restrictions and that there be included language which would repeal the Thomas leader which has prevented the accumulation of leave. The legislation that appears certain to pass meets both of these objectives but with a reduction in the amount of leave that may be accumulated.

### Retirement

On April 22, Mr. Rees, chairman of the House Civil Service Committee announced: "Our committee has before it 37 bills increasing retirement benefits. We have not scheduled any action on these bills pending the report of the committee on retirement policy. The Bureau of the Budget reported to me just a few days ago on these bills stating they preferred not to submit any reports on retirement legislation until that study is completed."

No doubt the committee referred to in Mr. Rees statement is the "Committee on Retirement Policy for Federal Personnel" established by Public Law 555, 82d Congress. The committee headed by Mr. Elliot Kaplan has only recently begun its work. Because of the late start it has applied for and will no doubt receive from Congress an extension of time for its report to June 30, 1954. In requesting the extension of time Mr. Kaplan told the Congressional Committee that he expected to have the most of the report made by the end of this year and that if Congress wished a report on any special subject even before that time his committee would most likely be able to give it so that Congress need not in general delay action on many retirement matters. The functions of the Kaplan Retirement Committee, as expressed in the law are as follows:

"(b) The committee shall make a comparative study of all retirement systems for all Federal personnel and report to the Congress not later than December 31, 1953. Its report, in-

cluding findings and recommendations, shall include the following:

"(1) The types and amounts of retirement and other related benefits provided to Federal personnel, including their role in the compensation system as a whole;

"(2) The necessity for special benefit provisions for selected employee groups, including overseas personnel and employees in hazardous occupations;

"(3) The relationships of these retirement systems to one another, to the Federal employees' compensation system, and to such general systems as old-age and survivors insurance; and

"(4) The current financial status of the several systems, the most desirable methods of cost determination and funding, the division of costs between the Government and the members of the systems, and the policies that should be followed in meeting the Government's portion of the cost of the various systems."

The Kaplan Committee has been contacted with a view to getting them to study the retirement situation that exists in Federal-State cooperative employment and make recommendations to the Congress. In this connection see the report of the Economic Committee in this issue of the Newsletter. Incidentally Mr. Kaplan has promised to be the speaker at our June luncheon meeting when he will discuss certain problems which his committee is studying.

### Commissions

As we go to press it seems quite certain that Congress will pass two laws, one to establish a Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government (similar to the Hoover Commission of 1947) and the other to establish a Commission on Intergovernmental Relations. The latter will be authorized to make a broad and comprehensive study of all aspects of the proper role of the Federal Government in relation to the States and their political subdivisions, and to make findings and recommendations to the President and the Congress with respect thereto.

Special emphasis is placed on the study into the objectives of programs of the Federal Government shared in by the States, and the extent to which the Federal Government has advanced into fields which are the primary interest and obligations of the States. This embraces Federal aid in all programs relating to education, health, and social security. Members desiring to follow from the beginning the developments under this legislation should obtain a copy of S. 1514 as it passed the Senate on May 6, the hearings on this bill in the Senate, and Senate Report No. 215.

### Federal Pay Structure

The House Civil Service Committee has been authorized by Congress to make an investigation of the Civil Service system. A wage comparison study between Federal jobs and those in private industry is a part of the plan. It has been indicated that the

results of the study may result in revisions of the Federal pay structure. In this connection former President Stauber has brought charts up to date comparing the rise in cost of living with advances in salaries. It is planned to use these at the appropriate time and publish them in the OPEDA Newsletter as soon as possible.

### Other Legislation

As we go to press (June 13) there are a number of pieces of legislation and Civil Service Commission actions in the mill in which OPEDA members are interested—retirement funds, leave, pay raises, etc. We shall try to summarize their status and content in the first issue of the Newsletter after the adjournment of Congress, which at this time is anticipated to be August 1.

## Purvis Committee Reports

The previous Congress established a body to make a study of the Civil Service. Melvin Purvis headed up the study and to date has issued the following documents and reports on the study:

S. Report 2102, Reduction-in-Force System in the Federal Government.

S. Document 33, Appeals and Grievances Procedures in the Federal Government.

S. Document 29, Personal Investigations of Employees and Applicants for Employment in the Executive Branch of the Government for Loyalty, Suitability, and Security.

These documents may be obtained by writing to the Senate Document Room, U. S. Senate, Washington, D. C.

In this connection the May council decided to have a subcommittee of the Economic Committee make a study of the question, "To What Extent do Reductions in Force Impair the Morale and Efficiency of the Professional Man?" Suggestions are solicited from members for the consideration of the subcommittee. The above report and documents should be helpful.

### Aplin

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officials here and to make suggestions that might improve conditions.

### Teamwork

"I am sure Secretary Benson and others who are new in the Secretary's office have a great interest in the employees of the Department—that they want to become acquainted with them and their problems. I find the workers to be objective for the most part—trying to do a good job and I hope it will continue to be a matter of teamwork—doing a good job for agriculture and the Department. These are critical times; no contribution can be too large or too small and we must all do our best in this particular situation.

"Thank you very much for asking me to speak to you on this beautiful day for the Wearin' o' the Green!"



## Committee Activities

### Professional Committee

Meredith C. Wilson, chairman of the Professional Committee, reports that he has his committee organized into three subcommittees to handle subjects pertaining to Professional Conduct, Personal Development, and Personnel Actions. Various matters in these fields referred to the Committee by the President or Executive Officer of OPEDA have been distributed to the appropriate subcommittees for study and report.

### Public Service Committee

The Public Service Committee has been concentrating its work on the theme of "leadership, direction and supervision." Chairman Gaston, SCS, at the suggestion of the Executive Committee, prepared a letter recently which President Henderson addressed to Mr. Aplin, director of Departmental Administration, in which he expressed on behalf of OPEDA its desire "to lend a helping hand in any way it can to further improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Department's work," since "that is the basic objective of our organization." The functioning of the three standing committees in this respect was explained and it was particularly pointed out that the Public Service Committee as a result of its studies believes that activity along the lines indicated offers considerable promise in advancing effective and efficient work in the Department. Mr. Aplin, in his reply, has indicated that the Department "shall have reason to consult with the committees of OPEDA on ways and means of improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the Department's work."

### Economic Committee

The activities of the Economic Committee are the subject of a separate article prepared by Mr. Ralph Sherman, chairman.

### Committee on Constitution and By-Laws

Dr. Porter, chairman of the Special Committee considering amendments to the OPEDA Constitution and By-Laws reports progress and will have recommendations ready for the October Council meeting.

### Office Records Committee

The Special Committee designated to examine office procedures in the OPEDA staff office with a view to simplification and improvement of such

procedures has completed the examination and submitted its report to the Executive Committee. The committee's recommendations have been approved. Their recommendations cover changes in operations with respect to sending out collection notices, maintenance of membership record cards, maintenance of the receipts register, and quarterly instead of monthly financial statements. These all add up to time saved without any sacrifice of information. Many thanks to the committee, L. K. Wright, chairman, Thelma Dreis, and John Wells for an effective job.

### Publicity Committee

At the May 4 meeting of the Executive Committee, a Special Committee on Publicity was established. Membership: Lance Hooks, PMA, chairman; Elwood R. McIntyre, Office of Information; Charles E. Wylie, PMA. Two immediate objectives of the committee are to see if the material that goes into the Newsletter might be presented more interestingly and to develop close relationship with the AG Reporter in an effort to get good coverage here in Washington.

## Executive Officer On Leave of Absence

In April OPEDA's Executive Committee agreed to a request from Ray Ward, staff director of the House Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Relations, for a short leave of absence of OPEDA's Executive Officer, Les Mahurin, in order that he might perform some special work for the subcommittee. It was felt that the assignment was in line with OPEDA's public service objective and would also be valuable training for the Executive Officer in his future work with OPEDA. The executive staff work has been adjusted accordingly. Mrs. Meyer and Miss Meehan of the OPEDA staff office have assumed additional responsibilities and Mr. Kneipp and Dr. Rand, former Executive Officers, have volunteered to help out if necessary. These assists, with additional attention from Chris Henderson, your president, and other members of the Executive Committee, have made the extracurricular activities of OPEDA possible.

## Have You Paid Your Dues for 1953?

We are waiting for about 350 members to find time to send in that \$2. October 1 is the dead line, but why wait until then, when \$2 more will be due for the following year?

## Cardon Talks to OPEDA Luncheon

The April 29 OPEDA luncheon meeting was highlighted by a talk by Dr. V. P. Cardon, director, USDA Graduate School. Dr. Cardon spoke of the importance of individual employee proficiency to the success of every organization. Said Dr. Cardon, "Among people of all countries is a recognized need for keeping individual proficiency at the highest possible level. Proficiency in the individual is the product of institutional training, as well as environment." He then cited efforts of the Graduate School to enlarge educational opportunities for Federal Employees, particularly outside the Washington metropolitan area. He reported recent efforts to interest universities and colleges, particularly land grant colleges, in furnishing greater educational opportunities to Federal employees in their specific fields of employment. One result of that effort is the educational program for Federal employees developed in cooperation with Boston University, which previously had established a similar program for State, county and municipal employees.

After explaining the truisms that support the view that service to the public is effective in direct proportion to the service rendered by the public itself, Dr. Cardon said:

"It is against this background that I am developing currently my thinking with respect to the Graduate School. It is within this framework that our present activities are projected. With the local program of the Graduate School you are already familiar. But I think you should know also that it has distinct limitations; in the first place, it is limited in its activities to employees in the Washington metropolitan area, yet in the Department of Agriculture itself 80 per cent of our employees are outside this area. They are just as eager to obtain additional educational facilities as the hundred thousand employees the Graduate School has served thus far. When I mention, in correspondence or any other way, that I am exploring the possibilities of extending the influence of the Graduate School beyond the local area I get letters from field service employees commending all who are trying to do something to enable those who want additional educational opportunities to get them.

"Another limitation is the budget restriction—and I advance no idea in support of legislation to make it otherwise. The school is dependent upon the registration fees paid by the students, over 95% of its funds derive from that source; the other 5% is interest on invested savings which, by the way, are equal to the budget requirements of the school for any one year, and from a small revenue derived from the sale of books. But under these limitations we are unable to give all of the course work employees seem to want—we are limited in space and in various other ways.

(Continued on page 8)



## Report of Economic Committee

Activities of the Economic Committee since the last Council meeting have been confined to cooperation with the informal interdepartmental committee now making contacts in support of pending bills to authorize credit toward Federal retirement for cooperative Federal-State service.

Following a conference with Congressman Harvey by one section of this committee, another section met on April 6 with Mr. Warren B. Irons, chief, Retirement Division of the U. S. Civil Service Commission. This was done to revive this subject and to obtain Mr. Irons' opinion as to the possibilities of action on this during 1953. Mr. Irons was of the opinion that little if any retirement legislation would be passed this year because Congress had set up the Committee on Retirement Policy for Federal Personnel, headed by Elliot Kaplan of New York. Mr. Irons thought it would be a good idea for the committee to meet with the Kaplan Committee to acquaint them with the bills under consideration.

By appointment, the committee met for an hour with Mr. Kaplan in his office at 1742 G Street N.W., on the afternoon of May 12. He was entirely unfamiliar with the bills which the committee is supporting, but expressed an interest in the problems. Mr. Kaplan is not sure that such a subject is within the scope of his committee's considerations. If it is, he gave the impression that it will receive careful study from all angles. A statement summarizing all legislation on this subject introduced in the 83d Congress, together with the arguments in favor of such legislation, was left with Mr. Kaplan. \* \* \*

During this period there have been no Congressional hearings of sufficient importance to warrant OPEDA testifying.—Ralph W. Sherman, chairman, Economic Committee.

## Membership Plan

Please note the "Box Score" of new memberships in this issue of the Newsletter. Are you satisfied with the showing of your unit? Since the approval of a Membership Plan by the January Council 10 units, or bureaus, of the Department have indicated they expected to do something about it. The "Box Score" shows the results to date. One unit, the Office of Experiment Stations, already had practically a 100 percent membership of its eligible employees.

Briefly, the plan provides that the Councilors of each bureau select such representatives throughout their bureau as will insure that each eligible employee is informed about OPEDA and its objectives and given an opportunity to join it. President Henderson thinks we should reach a goal of not less than 5,000 members by December 31—just about 6 months to go! That would about double our membership and be a good start toward the other 30,000 eligible employees. Whether the Plan has been instituted by the councilors in your bureau or not, you can individually help meet the goal by speaking to your fellow employees about OPEDA and see that an application blank in the form of that below is furnished to those who wish to join.

## BOX SCORE New Memberships

Unit	10-1-52 to 3-15-53	3-16-53 to 6-15-53	Total
BAE	1	3	4
AIC	1	1	2
ARA	1	---	1
BAI	1	4	5
BDI	1	---	1
CEA	2	1	3
EPQ	4	3	7
EXT	6	10	16
FCA	0	---	0
FHA	1	41	42
F&D	0	0	0
FAR	2	1	3
FS	2	3	5
HNHE	1	1	2
INF	1	2	3
LIB	0	0	0
OES	0	1	1
PISAE	2	3	5
PMA	75	6	81
ACP	3	2	5
REA	3	---	3
SEC	3	---	3
SCS	9	27	36
	119	109	228

The luncheon meetings  
have been discontinued for  
the summer.

Next luncheon will be  
held in October.

## APPLICATION BLANK

Organization of Professional Employees of the  
U. S. Department of Agriculture  
P. O. Box 381, Washington 4, D. C.

Date \_\_\_\_\_, 195\_\_

Application hereby is made for membership in the Organization of Professional Employees of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, the annual dues of which are \$2.00 per year and for which there is no initiation or membership fee.

Name (First name in full: Mr., Mrs., Miss, Dr.) \_\_\_\_\_

Bureau \_\_\_\_\_

Div. or Branch \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Classification: GS-\_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is check ( ), currency ( ), money order ( ) for \$2.00 for 195\_\_ dues. (Checks or money orders may be made payable to Org. Prof. Employees USDA or simply to O.P.E.D.A.)

(Signature of Applicant)



## Cardon

(Continued from page 6)

We can't provide all the seminars or arrange all the lecturers recommended, nor are we in a position to provide internships to take care of people who would like to come here and work in laboratories in Washington, or the reverse whereby outstanding employees might be sent out for training and work in other institutions. We would like to see all of these aims accomplished. The limitations within the school become more apparent when you think of what might be accomplished on behalf of that much larger group outside the Washington metropolitan area.

"I am exploring the possibilities with some encouraging success—of enlisting the interest and cooperative activity of additional institutions to develop within their own institutional limitations services designed to attract and satisfy the interests of Federal

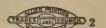
employees within the environs of those institutions. I am appealing to them not as a service to the Graduate School or to the Department of Agriculture, but on the basis that there is a very profound educational responsibility and an institutional function involved in this sort of thing. I am reminding them that most of our employees come out of their own halls, laboratories and lecture rooms and that their responsibility does not end when they graduate those students, because those students are endeavoring to render a service that is beneficial to all citizens—a selfless service that should be recognized—and they should be able to keep abreast of developments in order to keep themselves at a level at which they can perform the best possible service.

"I tell them that I haven't any sock into which I can reach for funds on behalf of their efforts in these fields. I can simply say that if they are interested to the extent that they are willing to think in terms of something perhaps requiring a little leadership

to explore and see what can be done to determine the need and how it may be met, we will do everything we can to help. We have been fortunate at one institution—Boston University—where there have been enrolled since this began last October about 165 Federal employees.

"In my visits with land grant institutions, I am hoping to develop a "pilot plant" approach at one or more of them with a view to doing something more. I think we have not done anywhere near what is possible. My appeal is along this line: Since 1887 we have developed excellent cooperation in research, and since 1914 in extension activities; but we have not yet found a way to cultivate and develop fully such cooperation within the educational function of the land grant system. The possibility is there, but some modification of current procedures may be required if we are to provide means of making available to Federal employees the educational opportunities so many of them would like to have."

OPEDA  
P. O. Box 381  
Washington 4, D. C.



Sec. 34.65(e), P.L.&R.